

**FRANK LAMPARD**

# **FRANKIE'S MAGIC FOOTBALL**

**METEOR MADNESS**





## CHAPTER 1

Bright sunshine trickled through the leaves of the forest as Frankie and his family pulled up next to a log cabin.

“The holiday officially starts here!” announced Frankie’s dad.

“Just what we need,” his mum

said, opening the car door. "Some time with Mother Nature."

Kevin looked up from his games console. "Yeah, great," he grumbled. "Loads of insects and a lumpy bed."

Frankie unclipped his seat belt, and jumped out of the car. They'd been driving for nearly three hours to reach the holiday camp. Max whined from the back, so Frankie went to let him out too. He sprang out on to the grass.

Frankie breathed in the crisp air of the forest. He couldn't wait to explore the camp. Apparently there were tennis courts, an outdoor heated pool and even a mini theme

park. But the best thing about this whole trip was that Louise and Charlie were coming with their families as well.

“Hey, Frankie, give me a hand with the luggage, will you?” asked his dad.

Frankie saw his father struggling with a huge suitcase, and rushed over to help him. Together, they dragged it out of the car. Frankie’s football rolled out after it.

“I don’t know why you keep that old thing,” said his dad. “Didn’t we get you a new ball for your last birthday?”

Frankie grinned and picked up

the battered, half-deflated ball. His dad didn't know that the football had magic powers that could take them on amazing adventures.

"Yeah, Frankenstein," said Kevin, smirking. "Why don't you just throw it away?"

Kevin knew all about the football's powers. Frankie didn't trust him with the secret one bit.

"I guess I'm just attached to it," he mumbled.

Frankie's mum had unlocked the door to the cabin, and they began to carry all their luggage inside. Frankie took his bag, and the ball, into a room with a bunk bed.

“I’m having the top!” said Kevin, shoving him out of the way and heaving his rucksack on to the top mattress.

“Fine,” said Frankie, with a sigh.

As he went back into the living room, he saw his dad carrying a long black case he’d never seen before.

“What’s that?” he asked.

His dad smiled as he laid it carefully on the table. He clicked open the lid. Inside, cushioned in padding, was a telescope.

“Goodness!” said Frankie’s mum, peering over his shoulder. “Have you still got that?”

“I dug it out of the loft,” said his

dad. Frankie watched as he took out and unfolded a tripod. "I used it years ago, for looking at the stars. There are too many street lights where we live now."

"Boring," said Kevin. "Who wants to look at the stars?"

"Actually," Frankie's dad said, "there's supposed to be a meteor shower tonight. If it stays clear, it should be quite a sight."

Max started barking, and Frankie went to the front door. Louise and Charlie were rushing along the path.

"Hi guys," said Frankie. "You're here already!"

“We’re in the next cabins along,” said Louise, tickling Max’s chin.

“Isn’t this place amazing?”

“Yeah, great,” grumbled Kevin.

“Ignore him,” said Frankie. “Have you explored yet?”

“We were waiting for you,” said Charlie.

Frankie’s dad was putting away the telescope. “Why don’t you all go for a swim while your mum and I unpack?” he said.

“No can do,” said Charlie, holding up his hands. He was wearing his goalie gloves. “Can’t get these wet.”

Frankie’s mum arrived. “Well, you could . . . take them off?”

Frankie and Louise laughed. Sometimes parents said the funniest things! Charlie never took his gloves off. He even wore them to bed.

Frankie whistled for Max. The little dog came scampering from a bush.

"You coming, Kev?" asked Frankie.

His brother shrugged. "I'd rather stay here and finish my game."

*Suit yourself,* Frankie thought.

He set off into the camp with his friends, then remembered something. He dashed back and grabbed his magic football. No way was he leaving it with Kevin.

There were paths leading

around the holiday camp, and maps showing where all the attractions were. There were lots of other kids around with their parents and several dogs as well. People were climbing trees, eating on fold-out tables, and playing with Frisbees and badminton rackets.

They passed loads of other cabins, the tennis courts and a restaurant, until at last they saw a roller coaster track peeking above the trees. The theme park!

“Wow, cool!” said Frankie. “Let’s check it out.”

They followed the track to a set of gates, with a sign made out of

looping metal letters. *World of Wonder*, it said.

Beneath it was another sign, written in red pen: *Closed Until Further Notice*.

The gate suddenly opened and a man in blue overalls came out.

"Sorry, kids," he said. "There's been some sort of electrical fault. None of the rides have any power."

Frankie's heart sagged. "Oh."

"But I see you're footballers," said the maintenance man, nodding to the ball under Frankie's arm.

"There's a five-a-side pitch just round the corner." He pointed at the path.